

Honorable Senators, and Congressman:

US The Department Of Justice Civil Rights Division:
BILL LANN LEE
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Ed Fritz of The NAB, A Country Bumpkin. Covers his Pal Trent Lott:

Senator Trent Lott, Rep. Billy Tauzin, Ed Fritz of The NAB, Belongs to
the
Triangle to Stop the FCC from Provideing, LPFM RADIO SERVICE
TO
Woman, Blacks, Hispanics, and the Less Fortunate !!!! As Proposed By
FCC
Docket MM-99-25 LPFM Community Broadcast Service, a Free
Enterprise for
Community Members:

Trent Lott and the NAB

Lobbyist wins key battles for
broadcasters

Web posted Apr. 07 at 02:34 AM

NAB data

By Jeannine Aversa
Associated Press

LAS VEGAS -- Eddie Fritts, a small-town broadcaster from
Mississippi, was written off by some as a country bumpkin
when he became the broadcasting industry's top lobbyist 16
years ago.

But under his presidency, the National Association of
Broadcasters has gotten each of the 1,600 broadcast
companies a second TV channel for free; persuaded
Congress to make it easier for TV and radio companies to
own more stations and keep their licenses longer; beat
efforts to regulate liquor ads; and forced rival cable
companies to carry local TV stations on their systems.

Little wonder, then, that Fritts, 57, still president of the NAB,
which is meeting here, is considered one of the most
effective lobbyists in Washington.

His next challenge: KILL LPFM ! ! ! Stopping the Federal

Communications

Commission from forcing broadcasters to give political candidates free air time for ads. And he'll be involved in efforts crucial to the industry to get cable TV systems to carry broadcasters' new digital TV signals.

When Fritts became NAB president in 1982, the inside-the-Beltway crowd thought: ``This guy is going to be in over his head,'' recalls Andrew Schwartzman, whose law firm, the Media Access Project, has done battle with Fritts. ``In fact, Eddie is crackerjack smart and very effective. ... He'll roll anyone that stands in the way.'

His ambitious drive is masked by a folksy, easygoing demeanor. ``I think there is a coolness about him, sort of a Caribbean coolness,' 'oh please..... stop! said Rep. Billy Tauzin, R-La., whose House Commerce subcommittee oversees broadcasting policy.

Fritts, who declined to be interviewed, has mastered the Washington insider's role of shepherding his constituents to build grass-roots support for the industry's positions in lawmakers' home states.

``Being a vocal advocate in Washington and across the country -- making noise so to speak -- about our issues is much easier than what our members must do,' ' Fritts said in a speech last year.

He also is able to get member companies whose business interests are widely diverse to present a unified front, lawmakers say.

For instance, television giant NBC, for instance, is big in cable, but doesn't own radio stations. CBS is one of the largest owners of radio stations; the parent companies of ABC and Fox both own movie studios.

NAB's members include the ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox networks, affiliated stations and independent stations covering large and small markets.

Having a unified front was instrumental in getting the industry a major break from regulations in the 1996 telecommunications law.

Back in 1983, NAB's lobbying was so ineffective that Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., a friend of the industry, declared at its convention: ``You can't lobby your way out of a paper bag.'

Another thing that makes Fritts effective is the power of the media, says Common Cause, which is facing off against the industry in the debate over free air time for politicians. Broadcasters are successful in Washington in large part

because they have the power to shape the news and control how and if politicians get on the air, Common Cause says.

Broadcasters reject this notion, which also has been made by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and former FCC Chairman Reed Hundt. Both lost in their efforts to get broadcasters to pay for the valuable second channels, which will be used to provide improved digital TV.

The NAB contributed \$626,165 -- mostly to Republicans -- from 1995 through 1997 in contributions to political candidates and soft money to political parties, according to Common Cause.

Fritts also has friends in the right places. He was a University of Mississippi classmate of Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., and has longtime connections with fellow Mississippian and former Republican Party chairman Haley Barbour, now a lobbyist whose clients include CBS.

Fritts began his broadcasting career in radio. He sold the four AM and four FM stations in Mississippi, Arkansas and Louisiana just after arriving at the NAB.

Now, says ABC's vice president Billy Pitts, by getting radio deregulated ``Eddie Fritts has done as much for radio in the last decade as Guglielmo Marconi did in the first decade.''

NAB data

Radio broadcasters created the National Association of Broadcasters 1923 to fight having to pay the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, ASCAP, copyright fees to music publishers when stations played their songs on the air.

MWeiss is absolutely right on the money here folks

NAB Staff: 180

Members: More than 5,000 radio stations and more than 1,200 TV stations.

Budget: \$36 million

President: Eddie Fritts:

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April 12, 1999

ACTION ALERT: Broadcast Outlets Should Cover Majority
Leader's Public Scandal
CNN, New York Times Cover The Story, but Network News Outlets
Still Silent
on Lott's Racist
Connections

Following a series of FAIR press releases and syndicated columnists covering Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott's associations with the CCC (Council of Conservative Citizens), CNN's Inside Politics presented a thorough summary of the scandal on January 13.

The very next day, the New York Times' John Kifner focuses considerable attention on Lott's lies about his connections to, and knowledge of, the CCC. ("Lott, and Shadow of a Pro-White Group.") Kifner was interviewed by MSNBC as well.

Lott's record is clear: He has misled the public, and the media, through his spokesman. When reporters raised questions about Sen. Lott's ties to the Council of Conservative Citizens (CCC), Lott's press secretary, John Czwartacki, told the L.A. Times (12/13/98) that Lott "vaguely" remembered speaking to the group "over a decade ago" before he was a senator. He added that Lott "doesn't consider himself a member. Nor does he have first-hand familiarity or knowledge of their views."

Here's what's known:

- 1997: Lott holds a private meeting with the CCC in his DC office
- 1997: Lott endorsement of the CCC is circulated in the group's literature
- 1995: Lott addresses the Mississippi chapter of the CCC
- 1992: Lott praises the group as keynote speaker at the CCC's national convention
- 1991: Lott addresses the Mississippi chapter of the CCC
- 1989: Lott appears in CCC publication Citizens Informer with his uncle, a CCC executive, and cousin, a member
- 1990-1998: The Citizens Informer publishes Senator Lott's column

Though Lott now repudiates the CCC, serious questions remain unanswered. Given his prominent role in the impeachment hearings, Lott will undoubtedly be fielding questions from the news media. Those pursuing questions of the hypocrisy of elected officials should question Lott about his own past, especially given his evasiveness on the issue.

ACTION: Broadcast news outlets have a responsibility to cover this story.

Recent reports from the New York Times, Washington Post (12/12, 12/16 & 12/19/98) and CNN are available. The media can also

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